

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 FEAE-00 ACDA-10 ERDA-07

NRC-07 OES-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /105 W

-----018818 231608Z /45

O 231520Z AUG 77 ZFF-4

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8536

INFO AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

US MISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1833

UNCLAS PRETORIA 4305

DEPART PASS SECRETARY'S PARTY

LAGOS FOR MOOSE AND YOUNG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MNUC, SF

SUBJECT: FURTHER SOUTH AFRICAN DENIALS OF NUCLEAR REPORTS

REF: PRETORIA 4281

1. JOHANNESBURG AFTERNOON PRESS AUGUST 23 CARREID FURTHER DENIALS BY SOUTH AFRICAN OFFICIALS, INCLUDING FONMIN PIK BOTHA, THAT SOUTH AFRICAN IS PLANNING A NUCLEAR TEST EXPLOSION. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS REPORT, BOTHA CALLED THE CLAIMS "UNBELIEVABLE." BOTHA WAS FURTHER QUOTED AS SAYING THAT HE COULD NOT ACCEPT THE ACCURACY OF PRESS REPORTS ON FRENCH FONMIN DE GUIRINGAUD'S STATEMENT ON SOUTH AFRICAN UNCLASSIFIED

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INTENTIONS. THE PRESS QUOTED BOTHA AS SAYING:

QUOTE WHEN MR. BRAND FOURIE (THE SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS) SPOKE TO THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR LAST NIGHT FOLLOWING THE CLAIM MADE, HIS REACTION WAS: "BUT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE." IN MY STATEMENT ISSUED DENYING THE ALLEGATIONS--WHICH I MADE TO THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR, THE WEST GERMAN AMBASSADOR AND THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR--

THERE WAS NO AMBIGUITY.
IT WAS A CATEGORICAL DENIAL. I DON'T WANT TO ATTACK
MR. DE GUIRINGAUD FOR WHAT HE MIGHT HAVE SAID. IF HE
WANTS TO HE CAN REJECT MY DENIAL--THAT'S HIS PREROGATIVE.
HE CAN DREAM HIS OWN DREAMS, HE CAN SUFFER FROM
ILLUSIONS IF HE WANTS TO, BUT HE CAN'T ATTACH SOMETHING
TO US WHICH WE ARE NOT DOING. I AM NOT ALONE IN NOT
BELIEVING IT. EVEN THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR DOESN'T
BELIEVE IT. HOW COULD IT HAVE BEEN INTERPRETED IN
THIS WAY AFTER THE CATEGORICAL DENIAL ? UNQUOTE.

2. THE PRESS REPORT ALSO QUOTED CHRIS VAN DER WALT,
DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION AT THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY
IN LONDON, AS DENYING THE ALLEGATION AGAINST SOUTH
AFRICA. VAN DER WALT REPORTEDLY SAID THE SOUTH AFRICA
HAD MADE IT VERY CLEAR IT WOULD MAKE USE OF ITS NUCLEAR
EXPERTISE ONLY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES. HE BLAMED THE
RUSSIANS FOR SPREADING RUMORS ABOUT SOUTH AFRICAN
PLANS TO EXPLODE A BOMB.BOWDLER

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED SECRETARY'S PARTY.

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